

BEAVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER: 11.02.00
SUBJECT: DIGITAL CAMERA USE
EFFECTIVE: FEBRUARY 1, 2001
REVIEW: 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006

1. PURPOSE. The taking of photographs at crime and accident scenes is critical to the proper recording of the scene for later investigative and prosecution requirements. Digital cameras have the ability to take numerous photographs with one reusable flashcard and can accurately record the scene. A secure storage location and chain of custody procedure is critical to this process. This policy establishes a use, control and evidence storage procedure that guards the integrity of the digital capture system. All members using digital cameras for the capturing of photographic evidence shall follow this procedure.

2. POLICY. It is the duty of all members to care for, control and correctly process all digital cameras and digital camera evidence. Members will follow a chain of custody procedure consistent with any item of evidence or property within the member's control.

3. ACCOUNTABILITY. Each patrol sergeant will be assigned one digital camera and flash cards for patrol use. The criminal investigation division and traffic division will have additional cameras. Flash cards will be labeled for inventory and accountability purposes. Sergeants may assign their camera to a FTO or senior shift member for use on their shift, but shall inspect the camera upon its return to his/hers control. Cameras SHALL NOT be transferred between shifts. (emergencies excluded)

4. TRAINING. Each officer will receive documented training concerning camera use and this General Order prior to capturing photographic evidence. Evidence technicians will receive documented training concerning this General Order and the receiving, storage, retrieval and archiving of digital photographs.

5. PROCEDURE (OFFICER USE). Officers should use digital cameras for all photographs that have previously been captured by the use of Polaroid film. This includes graffiti, misdemeanor crime scenes, property crime felonies, domestic violence, and traffic crashes. Officers shall use 35mm film to back up digital photographs if necessary.

A. The digital camera uses a flash card instead of a roll of film. Officers will capture only those photographs necessary to document that particular scene. Since Officers can see the digital image prior to saving it, selection is important. The

goal is to properly document the scene while eliminating unnecessary or poor quality images and avoiding added data entry.

- B. Officers will continue to take pictures of crime scenes, evidence, victims and traffic crashes as usual. Use of measuring devices within the photograph is encouraged.
- C. After the photos are selected and saved, officers will remove the flashcard and log it as evidence on a property evidence receipt. Place the receipt and flash card into an evidence locker.
- D. Officers will record in their narrative report that DIGITAL photographs were taken.

6. PROCEDURE (EVIDENCE TECHNICIANS).

- A. Technicians will process the incoming flashcard and property receipt as normal. Evidence technicians will process only those flash cards documented with a property receipt. Technicians will record the incoming flashcard(s) on a log sheet.
- B. Technicians will then process the flash card with Quicksolve program.
- C. Technicians will build catalogs, and transfer all digital photographs into the secure folder developed by ISD on the City of Beaverton computer network.
- D. The case number that was recorded on the property receipt will name the catalog.
- E. After the digital photographs are transferred to the catalog, the location of the catalog will be recorded on the property evidence receipt.
- F. Technicians will then erase the flash card memory.
- G. If the processed case involves domestic or misdemeanor assault, a color copy of the thumbnail digital photographs will be put in a sealed envelope and sent to records with the case number on the envelope. The envelope can be sent directly to the DA's office with the incident/arrest report.
- H. Technicians will immediately return the erased flash cards back to the SERGEANT who was originally issued the cards.
- I. If the district attorney makes a request for a digital photograph by phone or e-mail, an evidence technician will process that requested photograph to approximately a 5" X 7" size. It can then be sent either hardcopy or by e-mail to the requesting deputy district attorney.

J. Requests for copies of digital photographs by anyone outside the district attorneys office will be handled according to standard release guidelines. Copies of the actual file will not be released without approval of the district attorney or city attorney's office.

K. Evidence technicians will be responsible for archiving digital photograph files when that process is deemed necessary to free server space.

7. PROCEDURE (RECORDS).

A. Incoming envelopes containing digital photograph thumbnails will be put in the case file.

B. The envelope containing the digital photographs will be included if the incident or arrest report is sent to the district attorneys office.

C. If the digital photograph thumbnails are received after the case has already been submitted to the district attorneys office, those photographs will be forwarded along with any follow-up report.

Chief of Police

Date